

Imputation At Salvation



by [Pastor Jack Hyles](#) (1926-2001)



(Chapter 4 from Dr. Hyle's excellent book, *Salvation is More than Being Saved*)

First came the light. Then the firmament. The waters above were divided from the waters beneath. Then God lit the starry host of the night—the great light to rule the day; the lesser light to rule the night. Then God made the stars also. This was followed by the fish of the sea to populate the watery world beneath, and then came all the tribes of the animal kingdom, after which God was ready for man. He made man in His own image in the likeness of the eternal Godhead.

It was marvelous. Every tree that grew was pleasant to the eyes. Rivers hunted for the ocean as they flowed peaceably through verdant valleys. Every sound was symphonic and every scene was lovely. There was no war to palsy the heart, nor was there illness to cause man to fear appending death. The leaf never withered. The wind never howled. There was no frost to cause a chill, no perspiration humidified the brow, and no profanity placed a curse upon the ear. There was no heat, no cold, no weariness. There was no tempest to smite the blossom. Man had not learned to sigh or weep. The rose trembled not at the chill of a frost. Man did not know guilt, and feathered choirs provided melodious harmony for his enjoyment.

Yet something was missing! Man hungered for a kindred spirit to share with him the beauties of Edenic bliss. There was no one to whom he could say, "Isn't that a beautiful rose? Can you smell the fragrance of the gardenia? Look what a beautiful sunset! Aren't the blossoms lovely this morning?" He was hungry for a kindred spirit with whom he could share the loveliness of paradise. There she comes--God's satisfaction for his appetite, God's fulfillment of his desire, God's creation for his happiness. There she is dressed in all the beauty a human being could possess. Every gesture was filled with dignity, perfection was stamped upon her. Heaven was on her countenance. Love was her fragrance. Eden was transformed as the morning stars sang together and the sons of God shouted for joy.

There they are—man and his helpmeet, man and his completer. Man is now one. Together they shared the beauties of Eden. Garlands of flowers covered their path. Orchards yielded their fruit daily. They strolled through gardens that bloomed perpetually. They could not define sorrow nor heartache nor grief nor loneliness nor sadness nor depression. They had never seen a funeral or a hospital or an accident. They knew not the definition of a germ. They had never seen a tear nor a furrowed brow nor a wrinkled face nor a moistened eye nor a stooped shoulder nor palsied hands nor a weary back. They had never known of a deaf ear or a blind eye or leukemia or cancer or a bad cold. It was marvelous!

All this time the Lord Jesus was continuing to enjoy fellowship with the Father. Of this He spoke in **John 17:5, "And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was."** Four living creatures sang His praises constantly. The sun obeyed His voice. The moon bowed at His command, and the stars waited His orders. He was always in the presence of the Father while angels ministered to Him and planets sang His praises. Multitudes of heavenly creatures adored Him. Trumpets played upon His every arrival and sabers glistened as He walked the golden streets. What blessedness--perfect union in Heaven and perfect union in that other heaven called earth!

Then one day a groan was heard! Something had happened on earth! Ruin had visited and blighted the world. Man had listened to the evil one and a race had fallen. A curse has fallen upon man. He is ashamed of his nakedness. Woman must bear children in sorrow and travail. The winds will howl, the frost will chill, serpents will hiss and spread deadly venom. Roses suddenly have thorns, and gentle animals have become ferocious. Man has learned to perspire. The tree has learned to shed its leaves. The grass has learned to die. The rose has learned to bear thorns. The blossom has learned to be smitten by a tempest. The wind has learned to chill. And man has learned to die, but worst of all, man can no longer fellowship with his Creator. The justice of God causes Him to sever fellowship with man. The justice of God said, — but the mercy of God said, "I wish there were some way I could have fellowship with man restored." The justice of God said, — while the mercy of God said, "I love him and miss him so much." The justice of God said, "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death," but the mercy of God said, "For God so loved the world." How can His mercy and justice be reconciled? In only one way—Heaven's Crown Prince must come to earth! He must live a perfect life. He must fulfill and fill-full the law. Then He must go to the cross and bear the curse of mankind. The Sinless must become sin. The Righteous must become unrighteous. God must become man. Perfection must bear the marks of imperfection. Strength must become weak. He Who was rich must become poor. All this He does and more.

He flees to a virgin's womb. He is born in Bethlehem's manger. He lives among men and walks on earth for 33 years. There Was no welcome. The only open door was a barn door. He was born in another man's stable. He ate at another man's table. He rode another man's beast. He slept on another man's pillow, cruised in another man's boat and was buried in another man's tomb.

He went to Calvary and became sin. The King of kings had no throne but a cross. He had no crown but a crown of thorns. He had no scepter but a borrowed walking stick and no royal robe but a soldier's overcoat. He had no subjects but a jeering mob. All of this was because He wanted to be able to satisfy the mercy and justice of the Father. He cried, "It is finished!" after having paid it all. He was buried for 72 hours and rose from the dead. Now He can offer salvation to fallen man. Justice and mercy have kissed each other in lovely reconciliation. The fellowship that man enjoyed with God in the Garden of Eden and that God enjoyed with man In paradise can be restored if man will accept God's plan. Upon the acceptance of God's plan, God imputes to man the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ; and God, Who cannot fellowship with unrighteousness, sees man clothed in the righteousness of His dear Son.

Romans 10: 1-4, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

Man cannot earn that righteousness, for he has sinned. The only hope he has for righteousness is that he receive the righteousness of Christ purchased for him on Calvary—man has his choice—to trust his own righteousness and spend eternity in Hell or to trust the righteousness of Christ, which in response to his faith will be imputed unto him, and then spend eternity in Heaven. This is called "imputation in salvation."

To understand it better, get a piece of paper and a pencil or pen. Write your name at the top and then list under your name some of your sins. Perhaps you will list lying, hatred, envy, malice, vindication, revenge or maybe even some of those sins that we call "bad ones." Now something must be done with those sins, or there is no hope!

Let us suppose that you decide immediately to cease from those sins. Ah, that's wonderful, but you still have the past ones on the paper, don't you? Turning over a new leaf does nothing to atone for your past sins. They are still there on the paper, aren't they?

Let us suppose that you decide not only to turn from your sins but you decide from now on to do righteous deeds. List some of them on the paper under your sins—perhaps clothing the cold, buying shoes for those whose feet are bare, feeding the hungry, being kind to everybody, loving our enemies, etc. Add your own righteous deeds to the list. Now look up at the top of the paper. Are your sins still there? They certainly are. You are still in debt. The Bible still says, "**For the wages of sin is death,**" and nothing has been done to erase the sins. You have added righteousness. You have even stopped adding sins, but staring you in the face is that original list of sins for which there must be atonement!

Let us suppose that you join the church. Write below your list of righteous

deeds, "church membership," but you will notice that the sins are still there! You can add baptism, you can add communion, you can even add church work, but the account is still unsettled.

"Oh," you say, "I understand. We are saved by faith."

Now that is true only if the object of the faith is the proper one. Faith that there is a God, faith in deity, faith in mankind, etc...will not settle the account.

How shall we account for those sins? Write at the bottom of the list, "Calvary." It was there where Jesus bore your sins in His body and paid your penalty. **Romans 5:8, "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."** You have now trusted Him as your Saviour. He has charged the sins at the top of the list to His own account and has paid for them in full. So, scratch off the sins. That is what He does when we trust Him. Hence, there are no more sins on your record. You are now righteous; not because of what you did or have done but because of what He did. **Romans 5:19, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous."** Immediately upon your acceptance of Christ and your faith in His finished work of Calvary, God declares you justified; that is, He declares that you are as righteous as Christ because Christ became as unrighteous as you. **Romans 3:24, "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."** Your faith allowed you to receive, and you received because you believed. Faith removed the stone so that God could get to you the whole package.

Now that His righteousness has been imputed unto you, that takes care of the past. His righteousness has been imputed to you and you are dressed in His righteousness alone, but how about the future? Will there not be other sins? What will happen to them? **Romans 4:8, "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."** To a person in Christ dressed in His righteousness, God will not impute sin. Satan, the accuser, may come to God and say, "Did you see that sin that Hyles committed?"

God says, "Yes, I did." Satan says, "Then impute it." God says, "I will not!"

Satan says, "Why?"

God says, "It has already been imputed. It has been placed on the record of My Son, and I will not impute sin to those who are in Christ."

In review, let us see the order: (1) Sin. (2) Sin recorded. (3) Jesus became sin. (4) Jesus paid for sin. (5) Man believes it is true. (6) Man receives Christ and His payment for sin. (7) Calvary is made valid. (8) Man's sins are covered. (9) Man is justified in the sight of God. (10) God will impute no sin to him.

The big question is the sin question. Something must be done with the sins of man before fellowship with God can be restored. The only way to solve the sin question is to solve the Son question. When one receives the Son, the Son

receives his sin and the sinner receives the righteousness of God and stands before God now and forever righteous because he is clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ that has been imputed to man in response to man's faith and reception of Jesus.

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